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## Claims

1. An optical reference standard(2) comprising an optical reference material (10) characterised in  
5 that the optical reference material (10) comprises a binder (14) and a cereal (12) formed into a matrix to fixedly hold an amount of water, the reference material (10) being constituted with the binder (14), the cereal (12) and the water present in  
10 amounts to provide the reference standard (2) with desired spectral, mechanical and temporal characteristics.
2. An optical reference standard as claimed in Claim 1  
15 characterised in that the cereal (12) is selected from the group of one or more of oats, barley and wheat.
3. An optical reference standard as claimed in Claim 2  
20 characterised in that the cereal (12) is oats in the form of one or other of oatmeal and oat flour.
4. An optical reference standard as claimed in any  
25 preceding claim characterised in that the binder (14) is a gelling agent.
5. An optical reference standard as claimed in any  
30 preceding claim characterised in that the optical reference material (10) further comprises one or more components (26) selected to vary its optical density.